

VZCZCXYZ7343  
PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHAH #0309 0661029  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
P 061029Z MAR 08  
FM AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0391  
INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE  
RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE  
RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE  
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 3473  
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 1291  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 1158  
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 1727  
RHMFIUU/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC  
RUCPDOG/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC  
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC  
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 2291

UNCLAS ASHGABAT 000309

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE  
SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA/CEN, EEB  
TREASURY FOR BAKER/LANIER  
USAID/W FOR EE/AA

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [ECON](#) [EFIN](#) [TX](#)  
SUBJECT: TURKMENISTAN: PROGRESS TOWARD CURRENCY RATE  
UNIFICATION SLOWED?

REF: ASHGABAT 0017

11. (U) Sensitive but unclassified. Not for public Internet.

12. (SBU) It appears that Turkmen government officials have decided to slow down progress toward the planned 2009 unification of the country's dual exchange rate. Resident Deutsche Bank Head told UK Charge that he had been informed by Central Bank Chairman Geldimyrat Abylov that there will be no change to the current official rate of 6,250 manats/dollar and to the commercial rate of 19,800 manats/dollar for the next 4-6 months. In addition, the government has decided to delay the rate unification from January 2009 to some later unspecified time in the latter part of that year.

13. (SBU) COMMENT: The perceived rapid speed of the step-by-step unification had caused concern among local residents. Every few weeks, since the beginning of 2008, there have been rumors that the commercial rate would fall another few thousand manats on a date certain, causing panicked efforts to sell dollars before the rumored rate change. Seemingly in order to calm those fears, the government published a note in the state media at the beginning of February announcing that the Central Bank had no plans at present to change the commercial rate. While a 2009 currency rate unification remains the goal of President Berdimuhamedov, stability is also an important concern for the country's leadership. END COMMENT.  
HOAGLAND